

"The Washington Herald Forum"—A Department of Public Opinion

DEFENDS CAPT. MEYER.

Joseph J. Cotter Declares Criticism Unjust to Officer.

To the Editor of The Washington Herald: I noticed in The Herald the other day an article under the heading "House Storm Brooding Till Slacker Goes," which had reference to the introduction in the House of Representatives of a resolution calling upon the War Department for information as to certain commissions which had been issued, and Herbert A. Meyer is mentioned by name. I know that you do not want to do an injustice to a young man who has left his wife and baby and a congenial, important and honorable position in the civilian government service in order that he might do what he thought a greater service for his country in uniform in France. Mr. Meyer is a friend of mine and I happen to know the facts in connection with his service here and also as to his commission. I think it no more than right that I should give them to you for whatever use you should see fit to make of them.

In March of 1917, Mr. Meyer, who was captain of his company at the Stannum Military Academy, was commissioned as a captain in the Quartermaster Corps, and in the regular course of events was called for service with that corps a number of months ago, but did not leave his position here for the reason that he was handling important work that was not in such shape at that time that it could properly be left, and for this reason the War Department agreed to defer his call; in fact, after his first call to service was made he was sent to Alaska with a commission having to do with the construction of the Alaskan Railroad. After this commission returned and made its report and Mr. Meyer's work here was gotten in such shape that he thought he could leave it, he was then ready to go to the army. He was particularly desirous of going across and was not looking for work in Washington—in fact, he preferred, if he were going to work in Washington, that he do it as a civilian. His commission in the Signal Corps was really a transfer from one army corps to another, and he held his commission in the Quartermaster Corps for a year.

As to the personal side of the thing, Mr. Meyer had been placed in Class 4 of the draft, having a wife and baby dependent on him. He gave up the position of Assistant to the Secretary of the Interior in charge of Alaskan Railroad matters, in addition to leaving his family, and in the meantime, he was being paid a salary of \$10,000 a year, which Mr. Meyer drew here. He is on active field service away from Washington now, and at no time has he performed any military service in this city.

I am simply writing you this in the interest of a friend for whom I have a great deal of respect and admiration, and because of my admiration for Herbert Meyer's action in going to the army at the office of the personal time that he held so dear and of his ambitions in civil employment here.

JOS. J. COTTER.

PLEADS FOR CHARITY.

Mrs. Walker D. Hines Appeals for Unemployed Women.

To the Editor of The Washington Herald: The Little Workshop of the Heres-Callous quarter, 130 rue de Grenelle, Paris, was organized at the outbreak of the war in August, 1914. Its first effort was to supply work for French girls and women suddenly deprived of employment. Since then, however, it has added a hand-knitted sock industry to help the old grandmothers of the quarter, otherwise dependent and helpless, and so to supply socks to soldiers at the front. In addition to the work involved by these undertakings the devoted women interested in the workshop, especially Mrs. Henry Conkling, an American woman formerly of Brooklyn, and Mrs. Marguerite Guilhou, 131 rue de la Vierge, Paris, have felt the necessity of helping in the care of refugees pouring into Paris, particularly the children. But money is running short, and since this last drive the need is imperative. A recent cablegram from Paris says: "Plead for \$10,000. Send it on to feed children. Most important. Get it." "ALICE CONKLING."

Although I realize that this is a bad time to beg, with the hundreds of touching appeals for worthy causes coming to all of us, and the necessity for helping in our own country, still I feel it a duty I cannot shrink to appeal to the generosity of your readers to help me get this money. And I feel I am justified in asking their aid because of the great debt we all owe France.

Any amount, large or small, sent to me will be gratefully received and acknowledged. Every dollar I can assure you, will be used in the wisest

way by Mrs. Conkling and Mrs. Guilhou.

Remittances may be sent to me at my residence, 122 East Seventieth street, New York; or care of Walker D. Hines, Assistant to the Director General of Railroads, Interstate Commerce Building, Washington, D. C. ALICE M. HINES (Mrs. Walker D. Hines).

NATURE LOVER.

Tells What Spring Blossoms and Green Trees Should Mean.

To the Editor of The Herald: On every hand the story of the resurrection told by the wealth of blossoms and the grandeur of every leaf-covered tree. To all lovers of the beautiful the year-time flower show is open. The price of admission is simply observation and appreciation. Students burn midnight oil pouring over books of wisdom, but this annual plant awakening is a written page before which one may pause, reflect and gain an overpowering idea of the sublimity and greatness of created things. Friendship with nature finds no four-walled limitations. "There can be no black melancholy to him who lives in the midst of nature and has his senses still. There was never yet a storm but it was Aeolian music to a healthy and innocent ear." Knowledge can be gained with her as a counselor, not master who remains unresponsive, unappreciative and unenthusiastic before the creative and unending forces of the world. Throw open the windows of the soul. Let in today the divine light of hopefulness and fruition. Give a willing ear to the quaint sermon preached by Jack in the Pulpit. Have an open mind for the parable of humility revealed by the lowly violet and absorb from every source, everywhere, that is life-inspiring and worth while.

LOUIS VARNUM WOLFE.

RAPS RENT BOOSTERS.

Correspondent Places Them in Class with Money Sharks.

To the Editor of The Washington Herald: I beg space through the columns of your valuable paper to say a few words in behalf of thousands of "old residents" of this city, both white and colored, who have become a shining mark and easy prey for the "rent profiteers" in the nation's capital. All Washington still remembers that a few years ago there were companies of men who took such undue advantage of the clerks, and many others of this city, by lending money at such a shamefully high interest that they won for themselves the well-deserved title of "loan sharks." Knowing that these so-called "loan sharks" were robbing the poor people beyond all bounds of reason, Congress stepped in and enacted a law which put them out of business.

But as bad as the loan sharks were they were nothing to be compared to the present "rent profiteers" in this city. And let us all rejoice in the fact that there are statesmen in the present Congress who, thank God, are fixing to "move upon the wicked" the rent gamblers here who seem to be determined to make it impossible for the poor people to live in a house and at the same time have money enough left to buy a loaf of this so-called bread we eat.

House rent here at best is shamefully high, and if the unjust landlords raise the rents even a dollar more on the former price, the District Commissioners should take that as an increase in the value of their property and levy a higher tax on the same.

But the most shameful thing about this sudden jump in house rent lies in the fact that the colored people are being charged almost 50 per cent more than the former high price. Many of these people have been faithful tenants for ten, fifteen and twenty years, remaining with the same landlords or real estate agents, and to-day they must pay almost double the former rent. And in some cases, the wicked and ungrateful landlords have given the faithful colored tenants orders to "move out." They have even refused to accept a higher rent offer by the old faithful colored tenants.

Shame! Shame on them! By forcing the payment of unreasonable and unjustly high rents many of the real estate owners have become independently rich off the hard-earned money of the colored people. And now to show how well they appreciate their faithfulness to them, they not only

raise the rent, but give them orders to move out!

The loan sharks were put out of business, and Congress owes it to the people, both white and colored alike, to call a halt on these rent boosters. As they go up on the rent it should be taken as a great increase in the value of the property and the taxes should be raised accordingly. Isn't that fair?

But a word more about the colored people. Here are true and tried friends of the white people with the very stamp of patriotism and love of country written in their foreheads. And it goes without saying that these people have never been found wanting when called upon to do their part in defending the country, whether it be on the battlefield, in the trenches or with their little money.

They answered, "Hear 'em I" to the first and second liberty loan call of the government, and rest assured that they will not be found wanting in the "third call." Now, considering these facts to be true, ought not these patriotic friends to be counted worthy of consideration and protection by the powers that be? With all of his love of country there are some white ingrates who would rather favor a known German spy and enemy than to give the faithful colored brother what is rightfully due him. And to these let us say that Eye—that Eye which never sleeps—is upon you!

J. C. CUNNINGHAM.

CRITICIZES LAW.

Reader Believes Sedition Bill Could Stand Amendments.

To the Editor of The Washington Herald: The pending "Sedition Bill," as it has been called, or amendment to the espionage law, as offered by Senator Walsh, et al., seems to be designed, almost exclusively, to prohibit and penalize criticism of, or any contemptuous reference to the so-called "neutral" or safety first officers of draft age and good physical condition who, holding commissions in the army, are detailed to perform office or clerical work, messenger service, etc., in Washington and in other "islands of safety." In any event, whether it was so intended or not, that will be the actual effect of the measure if enacted into law without change and as it now stands. ALSO it does NOT contain any clause or provision which would make profiteers amenable to the law, or would permit their prosecution and punishment as traitors. This last constitutes the defect of the law now stands and, in the opinion of many well-informed men and women, if the bill is finally passed without a provision or clause including all the profiteers and persons who are to say, people who get their public funds without giving the government value received for same, by means of cost-plus contracts or otherwise—it will prove to be a very unpopular measure and, moreover, politically, for all Senators and Representatives who support or vote for it.

Proper amendment, or amendments, should be offered, including all the profiteers and persons who, directly or indirectly, steal any public funds in time of war, and excluding from the operation of same, and from penalty of any kind, truthful criticisms of the government and persons who, in respect to soldiers or sailors, are not actually in the fighting ranks, at least, or officers of the U. S. army or navy who have been, in any manner, directly or indirectly, connected with any profiteering enterprise or conspiracy against the government; and a record roll call should be demanded on such amendments so that the country may know just how and where each Representative and Senator stands with respect to adequate punishment for profiteers.

In the opinion of many thousands of people, of all classes, profiteers are positively the vilest and most contemptible traitors who the country will have to deal with; and operations the most far-reaching and deadly in effect, so far as our efficiency in the war against Germany is concerned. Won't you please see to it that such amendments are offered in both Senate and House, and a record roll call demanded?

A READER.

INDORSES STAND.

J. W. Richman Commends Herald Criticism of Swivel Chair Men.

To the Editor of The Washington Herald: Your scathing publicity of the "swivel chair" commissioned officer "slacker" scandal is one of the most heartening things that has come to light. You have rendered those who are wholeheartedly and conscientiously working to make the world "safe for democracy" the greatest service.

You will receive as a result of your efforts the enmity of the patriots for profit of those who wave the flag and never lose an opportunity to loudly boast of their patriotism and love of "my" country. The camouflage artists who shout "slacker," "pro-German,"

"I. W. W.," "disloyalist" at every one who points to these abuses and who refuse to go "bug-house" over the war—the super-patriotic highbrow who flamboyantly contends that the way to make the world safe for democracy is to try and root out every vestige of it we have left—these will point the craven finger and about the above named epithets at you.

"Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad" still holds good, though we have gotten beyond the "gods" stage in our migration upward. Many sincere Americans, patriotic as any of the noisy, boasting breed, see our greatest danger in the militaristic bureaucracy that is slowly getting a strangle-hold on the masses of unthinking folks. The only few instances since the war began where the American citizen has had an opportunity to express his honest opinions—at the basic root of democracy, the ballot box—what have we seen? Well, not to tax the thought tank too harshly, look to Wisconsin the last two or three days. What do the patriotic friends of America have to say? Talking of putting the State under martial law. If anything were needed to brand them as disloyal to fundamental democracy, the giving utterance to such a thought will condemn them. Real democracy has nothing to fear by turning the searchlight on the feasting slobs and I am pleased to see that The Washington Herald has the vision to spot one of them. I shall expect to see the "Knights of Liberty," the "National Council of Defense," and a host of like "me too" patriots lay siege to your redoubts. If they do, I shall be glad to give up my life here in behalf of democracy at home in your defense.

J. W. RICHMAN.

CRITICS "OUT OF PLACE."

Should Abolish German Language Publications, Says Reader.

To the Editor of The Washington Herald: In so far as the United States government is concerned, the conduct of the war should be turned over to President Wilson, ex officio commander-in-chief of the United States army and navy. Too many cooks spoil the soup. Senator Sherman, Secretary Baker, of the War Department, and one of the most loyal, patriotic and able men in President Wilson's cabinet, and a man in whom the President has the utmost confidence, and so it is with the rest of the members of the Wilson Cabinet. They are all loyal, faithful, able, sincere and true to the Chief Executive of this mighty and great nation.

The "critic" of the Wilson administration are wholly "out of place" and tune at this critical time in the history of our country. Mark what I say, Senator Sherman: The nation stands by President! And so does the great State of Illinois, "regardless of Senator Sherman." In my humble opinion, it would not be a bad "idea" if Congress abolished all German language publications in this country, the duration of the war at least. German "propaganda" has proven to be a "curse" to this country, and every other country "at war" with Germany. German "propaganda" has even entered the "homes" of the people in neutral nations, to say nothing about German "spies" and "diplomats" higher up. In some States of the Union the German language has been "eliminated" from the public and parochial schools. That is wise, just, right and proper, and as it should be. If Kaiser "Bill" of Germany had any justification and power within the United States, the first thing he would do would be to abolish the English-American language on free American soil.

GEORGE A. RITTER.

AGAINST UNIFORMS.

J. A. C. Believes Women Should Not Have to Wear Them.

To the Editor of The Washington Herald: Kindly allow us to voice our objection to an article appearing in a recent issue of your paper, with reference to "uniforming" girls who are working for the government, in a characteristic military fashion.

In view of the fact that the majority of the girl employed are working for the government are sacrificing the comforts of home and the congeniality of a host of friends to come to the Capital City to do a patriotic work, we would like to express our sentiments on the subject.

With all due respect and honor to the girls who have made this sacrifice and have come to Washington to help the government in the war, we are opposed to anything which would jeopardize their moral or social welfare. Isn't there the possibility that a girl arrayed in a distinctly military form of dress would fail to command the same respect and admiration that would be bestowed

upon her sister going and coming from work without this uniform? We cannot be too careful in a matter of such great importance. It is our duty to look at the subject from all angles and all view points before we make a final decision of such a nature.

There is a distinct individuality of dress and manner that a girl possesses which makes her an object of admiration to her friends and all those about her. Will not this proposed uniform destroy that individuality? Does the modest and home-loving girl want this form of advertisement? Shouldn't the sacrifice that they are making be on a higher level and of a nobler type than the kind that plays to the "gallery gods?"

The main argument given by those who propose this form of dress is that a lot of money or dearly spent in dressing would go into liberty bonds and war saving stamps. Have they ever stopped to figure what a soldier's uniform is worth today? Have they ever given thought to the fancy price that our merchants would charge for the uniform, owing to the cost of material? Wouldn't the same tendency for getting the best that there is in the line of clothes exist even in the purchasing of a uniform?

This criticism is given in good faith and in a constructive sense. We are opposed to girls coming to work as if they are going to some social event. However, we would suggest simple white blouses and plain blue skirts as being an economical and becoming style of dress and something that would not have a martial appearance.

Trusting that you will insert this article in your newspaper at your earliest convenience, and thanking you for your valuable time and space, we are,

J. A. C. of Section E, A. G. O.

HER TRIAL AND OURS

(From the Louisville Herald.)

England today faces one of those great crises out of which in the past she has always come forth renewed and resurgent, triumphing and triumphant.

We like to think of that in this, the hour of her like, carry the thought of this in her day of trial. We, who are Americans, are, in a very real sense, British, too. Their story is our story, even as their language is our language. In the broadest and most catholic sense, their religion, their outlook, their very habits of life, their law, their tradition. If we are what we are it is because our forefathers, in a great majority of cases, were born on those British Isles which their forebears had defended from invasion and rescued from ignominy. Philip of Spain and his armies, Kaiser Wilhelm and his armies—do they not spell the same test, demand the same sacrifice and prove the same spirit? Outnumbered then, outnumbered now, but daunted not as they are, and in the field in which they fight today is a field that has known British fighting in the past, the best British fighting and the noblest British dying. It was at Waterloo, the Low Countries, that Sir Philip Sidney gave up his life, his sweet and gentle life, his life beautiful in letters as it was in living, that a comrade might be saved. It was at the battle of Tewkesbury that British volunteers came to the aid of the burghers who defied the Spanish victory. And it was in the Spanish Countries, too, that Wellington broke the heart of Napoleon, as a hundred years earlier Marlborough broke the heart of Turin.

It has been somewhat the habit in this country to neglect the bond that unites us to the British Isles, and to remember only the ugly separation and the stupid blundering that followed hard upon it. It is because it is part of our daily life that we pay little attention to it, and it is because our teaching of history has been one-sided that, what attention we do pay to it is for the most part unfriendly, when it is not actually unfair. And yet it is difficult to imagine what America would be like if it were not so very much like England, and upon what models we should be shaping our lives, our institutions and our laws. For, as it happens, such other civilizations have been on this continent have left virtually no impress whatever, no institution, scarcely so much as a custom that we can not shake.

What remains to us of Spain save the picturesque ruins of California. What do we retain from France unless it be so much of the Code of Napoleon as survives in New Orleans? Where do we acknowledge the Hollanders except in legend and in certain architectural peculiarities? But England is with us in our waking hours and our sleeping hours, in every aspect, purpose and occurrence of our lives. The English Bible is our Bible; the English sturdiness and downrightness and contempt of shams are part of our heritage. It was only when England was ceasing to be an England worthy of herself, and drifting into an England ignoble and in foreign bondage, that those Pilgrim Fathers were impelled, with a great rending of ties, with bitter anguish and saddened soul, to seek out our bleak shores and found another England, a new England. And they brought with them no sense of disloyalty, no thought of divorce, no wish of disassociation. They gave to the places of their sojourn the names that were dear to them. They recalled by that loyal habit the scenes that they had known and loved. And from that time on whenever the American planted a young community, the village, the city, the river, the very hills were plausibly remembered.

If in this great war we had taken no part and shared no responsibility, if our neutrality had withstood all peril and our good will been equally at the service of one group of combatants or the other; if business had gone on as before, and the far, the wrench, the trials and the anguish had all alike been foreign to us and aloof, we could not then have been indifferent; we could not then have sat by idly as spectators and critics, judging the blows, making the points and careless of the issue. Right or wrong it was inevitable, it was not avoidable that England's agony should be ours. We might have quarreled, as families do, but in the great striving, in the heroic martyrdom, it was not possible, it could not have been possible, that we should be untouched. But as it happened we are sharers and partners with England. We are her ally in deed and in fact, as so long we were in thought and in heart. Disaster to the British today is disaster to America, neither more nor less, and it is impossible to separate the cause of one from the cause of the other.

The better reason then that we pray that this cloud may pass from her and this burden be lifted, As we write it seems to be beyond her strength. And yet, as we have said, there has been the best never in a task she might not enter upon, a duty she could not perform, a sacrifice not gallantly to be made.

Let that be proudly remembered, let that be proudly remembered, let that be proudly remembered.

HISTORICAL FLAG INCIDENTS



Barbara Frietchie and The Flag

HERE we show the main incident in the story of Dame Barbara Frietchie, who, gray-haired old woman tho' she was, feared not to flaunt the beloved Stars and Stripes in the very faces of the enemies of her country as they marched through the streets of Fredericktown.

That the rebel leader, General Stonewall Jackson, recognized and honored her act as one of extreme bravery and patriotism, is shown by the lines of the verse in which he says: "Who harms one hair of your gray head dies like a dog; march on," he said.

Occasions constantly arise in every village and municipality when every patriotic American citizen should SHOW THE COLORS. Upon every National Holiday and upon occasions of a purely local nature the Stars and Stripes, floating to the breeze from every house and flagstaff, lends color to the occasion and fosters a spirit of patriotism as well.

The Washington Herald makes it easy and profitable for all of its readers to secure a "BEAUTIFUL FLAG." Easy, because it is simply necessary to clip a Coupon from the bottom of this ad and bring it to The Washington Herald office with \$1.10 in cash. Profitable, because such a flag as this has never before been sold at a price less than \$2.50.

Your flag should be flying every day, and The Washington Herald purposes that every one shall have one on hand to make it possible. Here is an offer whereby every home may have a beautiful sewed ribbon flag 6x4 feet; made of Reliance (American) bunting; rainproofed; dyed in fast colors, not printed; seams double sewed; strong canvas beading and metal grommets—a flag regularly sold for \$2.50.

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Enclosed please find \$2.50 in payment for Daily and Sunday Herald for three months (Daily Herald only four months). Please send me 6x4 \$2.50 American flag, as per your offer today.

Name Address

WASHINGTON'S POLICE CAPTAINS—No. 6.

By RICHARD MANSFIELD, the Policeman Cartoonist.

